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AUSTRALIAN

# Forest History

SOCIETY Inc.

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Newsletter No. 36  
December 2003

*'... to advance historical understanding of human interactions with Australian forest and woodland environments.'*

## *The Fight for the Forests*

In mid-October, the National Institute for Environment at the Australian National University (ANU) presented a symposium to mark the 30th anniversary of the publication of *The Fight for the Forests: The Takeover of Australian Forests for Pines, Wood Chips and Intensive Forestry*, written by Val and Richard Routley (later Val Plumwood and Richard Sylvan).

Published by the ANU in 1973, it was the most widely read book about Australian forests and its appearance provoked a storm of controversy across the nation making it a critical marker in the history of environmentalism, forest management and public forest policy. Convened by John Dargavel, speakers at the symposium included Dr Plumwood, who presented a paper titled *The Fight for the Forests Revisited*, while others - including Libby Robin, Neil Humphreys, Peter Kanowski and Fyfe Bygrave from the AFHS - provided a wide range of perspectives.

One comment that I found fascinating was that despite being such an influence on both of modern environmentalism and on modern forest policy, the book has been "forgotten" by the inherited memory of conservation groups. This of course could be construed as an indication of the book's success that its attitudes have been so broadly incorporated into the mainstream. Nevertheless, it was an interesting comment.

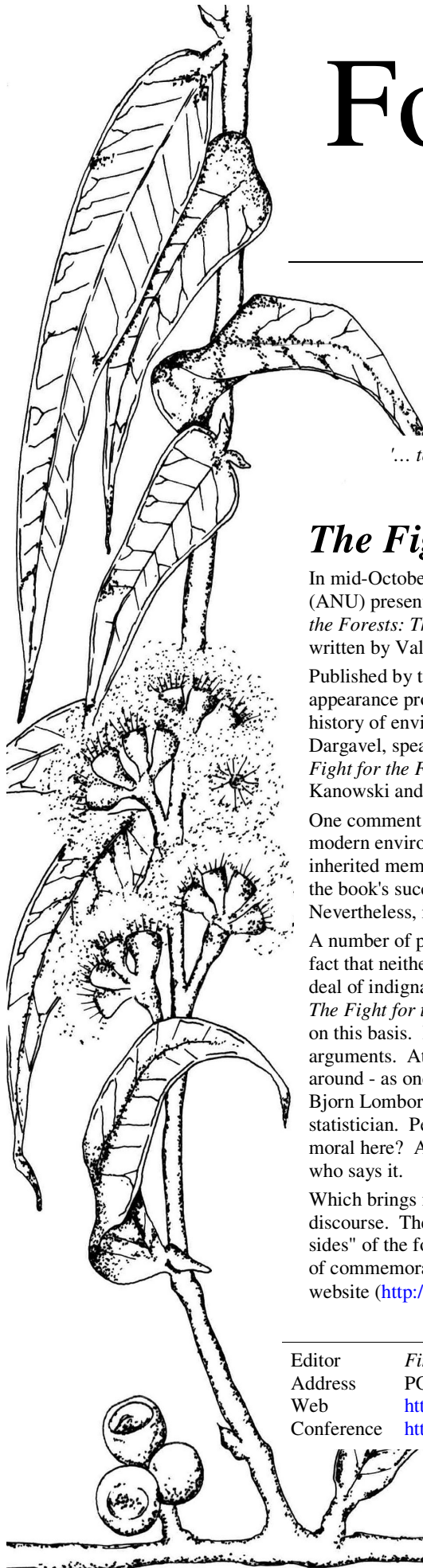
A number of presenters made the point that at the time of its publication, much was made of the fact that neither of the authors were foresters but were philosophers, and that there was a great deal of indignation about their right to question something outside their professional expertise. *The Fight for the Forests* was derided by many in the forestry profession and elsewhere solely on this basis. However, as was pointed out, there has not been a substantial rebuttal of the arguments. Attacking the credentials of people who question conventional wisdom is still around - as one presenter remarked, just as the Routleys were dismissed for being philosophers Bjorn Lomborg's recent work *The Skeptical Environmentalist* has been dismissed because he is a statistician. Perhaps addressing the arguments rather than seeking to discredit the voice is the moral here? As was observed, it is a logical fallacy to find fault with an argument because of who says it.

Which brings me to John Dargavel's closing remarks about the importance of civility and civil discourse. The day brought together a disparate and interesting array of people from "both sides" of the forestry debate and many with sympathies in the middle, and was a wonderful way of commemorating *The Fight for the Forests*. Many of the papers are available on the NIE website (<http://cres.anu.edu.au/fffweb>).

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ISSN 1033-937 X



## AFHS Sixth National Conference on Australia's Forest History, Augusta WA, 12th-17th September 2004

Western Australia will host the AFHS Conference for the first time, with Augusta as the venue, near to the Margaret River region three hours south of Perth. The second announcement, including a "Call for Papers", was recently issued. Abstracts of 250 words or less are requested by **30th January 2004**. The theme of the conference is "A Forest Consciousness" and there will be five separate symposia:

- 1) Ecosystem health;
- 2) Evolving sustainability;
- 3) Conflicts over forest use;
- 4) Reconstructing pre-European forests; and
- 5) Open sessions.

Organisation of the conference is being overseen by a committee comprising Jenny Mills (AFHS Vice-President), Geoffrey Bolton (Murdoch University), Mike Calver (Murdoch University), Pierre Horwitz (Edith Cowan University) and Janie Binet (Conference Organiser).

A complete Registration Brochure will be available in March 2004, but Expressions of Interest can be lodged with Janie Binet <[ajcsbinet@hotmail.net.au](mailto:ajcsbinet@hotmail.net.au)>.

The announcements are available on the AFHS website at <[http://cres.anu.edu.au/envirohist/forest\\_announcement1.pdf](http://cres.anu.edu.au/envirohist/forest_announcement1.pdf)> (1st announcement) and <<http://cres.anu.edu.au/envirohist/forestbrochure-2nd.pdf-21.pdf>> (2nd announcement).

## AFHS 2003 AGM - New Committee for 2003-04

The AFHS Annual General Meeting was held in Canberra on 31st October. The committee for the 2003-04 is:

President	John Dargavel
Vice-President	Jenny Mills
Secretary	Kevin Frawley
Treasurer	Fintán Ó Laighin
Committee	Denise Gaughwin John Huth Peter Davies Brett Stubbs John Banks

The 2004 AGM will be held at the 2004 Forest History Conference to give more members the opportunity to attend.

## Coffee Thought



## What Our Members are Doing (well, some of them anyway)

### Patricia Crawford - Contested Country

Patricia Crawford and Ian Crawford's book, *Contested Country - A history of the Northcliffe area of Western Australia*, was recently published by the University of Western Australia. Chapter 6 is titled "The Battle for the Forests" and looks at the 1990s. The book focuses on a small country community, discusses the dispossession of Aboriginal people and of various attempts to make the land productive. It tells how people have shaped it, been affected by it, exiled from it or struggled to stay on it.

Patricia is a history professor at the University of WA, specialising in 17th century England. Ian is head of human studies at the WA Museum, specialising in Aboriginal art, culture and history. This is their first collaboration.

### Paul Star - Environmental History in New Zealand / New Zealand Grasslands

I am currently abridging dissertations by history students on environmental history themes, for a collection to be published by the University of Otago Press next year. AFHS member Judy Bennett and Tom Brooking (both of the University's history department) are the other editors. Tom is also the principal investigator, while I am one of the two main researchers, for a project which has just received substantial NZ government support for 2004-06 through the Marsden Fund. The project is titled "Empires of Grass: The Reconstruction of the New Zealand Grasslands 1850s-1950s". In this time New Zealand underwent rapid, wide ranging and intensive environmental transformation. A country, more than 50 per cent of which was covered in forest and another quarter in tussock, became one in which half the land area is carpeted in English grasses. By looking mostly at late nineteenth and early twentieth century evidence we want to learn about how and why this transformation occurred, as well as something about changing practices of land management in general.

### John Dargavel - Report on Exemplary Forest Management / The Fight for the Forests

I am all too easily distracted by interesting projects. A distinctly odd one was being engaged to write one of the case studies for an FAO project on "Exemplary Forest Management in the Asia-Pacific". Forestry Tasmania had nominated their southern forests as an example, so the project provided an opportunity to re-visit Geeveston, stay in Mrs Double's Boarding House (a.k.a Vicki Potter's very comfortable B&B, "Cambridge House") and catch up with Dick Geeves. In Hobart, I caught up with Kaye McPherson, Andrew Wilson, Kevin Kiernan and Gary King. Given the fraught nature of Tasmanian forest politics, the views expressed by many of the people I interviewed were polarised which made writing "a challenge".

I also convened a symposium at the Australian National University to look at the influence of *The Fight for the Forests* written thirty years ago by Val Plumwood and the late Richard Sylvan (then V. and R. Routley).



Interestingly, it was only the third book of national scope to be published about Australia's forests. I regard the irascible David Hutchins' report of 1916 as the first and Max Jacobs' 1955 *Growth Habits of the Eucalypts* as the second.

#### **Michael Roche - An Errant Member's Report**

Although I've kept my membership up to date and even managed a pleasant evening with John Dargavel last July to catch up on forest history matters, my research has drifted to other topics in recent years. The *Forest Consciousness Conference* in September of 2004 will provide an opportunity to get back on course. I'm also concerned that next year it's 20 years since I produced a literature review of the forest history in New Zealand for the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry*. In 1983 it would have seemed alarmist in the extreme to predict that the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* would cease to exist in 2004 (replaced by *New Zealand Forestry* in 1986) let alone that the New Zealand Forest Service would not exist into the 21st century (disestablished in 1987). Yet if anything, these changes have stimulated forest history in New Zealand.

#### Current Projects:

Review of writings on Forest History in New Zealand 1984-2004.

Discourses of Deforestation in New Zealand (1868-1955)

#### Recent Publication:

Roche M. 2002 "The state as conservationist, 1920-1960: 'Wise use' of forests, lands and water" in Brooking T. and Pawson E. (eds.) *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, pp183-199.

#### **Sybil Jack - Threats to Forests in New Caledonia / Mapping of Elms in Britain / Replanting trees in the African drylands**

1. I was recently in New Caledonia where threats to forests are a major problem so the following may be relevant. "The government of New Caledonia through the Centre of Information on the Environment is developing programmes to develop the sensitivity of the wider public to the threats to forests in their area, particularly the dry or sclerophyll forests (with a rainfall of less than 1,100mm annually) on the west coast in areas under 300 metres. These are regarded as one of the two hundred ecosystems in the world which most urgently need protection as they are under threat from mining, agriculture and deer. Sixty percent or approximately 438 of the species that make up this fragile ecosystem are endemic but they are being destroyed by more rampant species like the false mimosa and the lantana. Once the main vegetal cover of New Caledonia there now remains only rare pockets of undisturbed forest in areas that are difficult of access."

2. The location of elms in Britain is being mapped by the ramblers association and others, as interest is growing on the possibility of replanting the countryside after the disasters of Dutch elm disease with offshoots from trees with either a natural immunity, or after laboratory work developing a gene for resistance to that disease.

3. There is an association in the UK called Tree Aid which is helping replant trees in areas of African drylands. It is currently focussing on Mali, Niger and Ethiopia. Its address is Brunswick Court, Brunswick Square, Bristol BS2 8PE, United Kingdom. It also has a website - <<http://www.treeaid.org.uk>>.

#### **Roger Heady - The Canberra Times**

A feature of AFHS conferences has been the microscopic images of plants and timber that Roger Heady has presented. Back in August, the *Canberra Times* presented a few pictures of wattle buds and flowers. They are still on the *Canberra Times* website at <<http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/wattle>> (accessed 4th December). Well worth checking out.

#### **Honour and Glory - Awards to Members**

##### **Geoffrey Bolton - Frederick Watson Fellowship 2003**

Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton from Murdoch University was recently announced as the 2003 recipient of the Frederick Watson Fellowship awarded by the National Archives of Australia.

Professor Bolton will use the fellowship to complete a book about Sir Paul Hasluck and his contribution to Indigenous Affairs and Foreign Policy. Professor Bolton will commence his fellowship in Autumn 2004 and will be working in the Archives' Canberra office during this period.

The Frederick Watson Fellowship was established by the Archives to encourage and facilitate the use of the archival resources of its collection by promoting archival research in Australia and encouraging scholarly use of its holdings. The Fellowship is named after the historian, librarian and archivist Dr JF Watson (1878-1945) who is perhaps best remembered for his contribution to the Historical Records of Australia series.

##### **Libby Robin - 2003 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards Prize for Science Writing**

On 11th November, the ten winners of the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards for 2003 were announced. Libby Robin received the Prize for Science Writing for her work, *The Flight of the Emu: A Hundred Years of Australian Ornithology 1901-2001*, published by Melbourne University Press in October 2001.

##### **John Banks and Tony Fearnside - ACT Heritage Grant for Bendora Arboretum**

Congratulations to John Banks and Tony Fearnside who have been awarded an ACT Heritage Grant to review the present status and management options for the Bendora Arboretum, first planted in 1940. It is the only one of the 23 Arboreta in the Brindabella region to have survived the ACT bushfires of January 2003.





## Global Caucus on Community Based Forest Management

The XII World Forestry Congress in Quebec City, Canada 21st–28th September 2003 announced community forest management on the global agenda. Plenary speakers and sessions as well as side events featuring community forest management gained attention. The **Global Caucus on Community Based Forest Management** was formalised during the proceedings.

The Global Caucus emerged from the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development but the XII WFC offered an opportunity to consolidate the network. Lisa Marie Ambus (Canada) has been nominated as the Global Facilitator of the Caucus. Regional Focal Points (RFPs) left with briefs to develop regional networks - **Dr Anitra Nelson** is the RFP for Australia. The Caucus aims to contribute to global deliberations and agreements involving forests and forest peoples and to promote community forest management at national and regional levels.

The next meeting for the RFPs will be held alongside the Guatemala Community Forestry Conference planned for the last week of April 2004. It has Ford Foundation support and is likely to involve around 100 participants from all round the world. Between now and then Dr Nelson would like to develop a comprehensive list of community forest management practitioners and supporters to formalise our regional network and to hold meetings when and where feasible.

If you are a community forest management practitioner or supporter and wish to participate in the Global Caucus on Community Based Forest Management, contact Dr Anitra Nelson at [anitra.nelson@rmit.edu.au](mailto:anitra.nelson@rmit.edu.au) or (03) 9925 2527 or 9355 7587.

## Community Forest Management and the XII World Forestry Congress

Around 50 papers in the *Congress Proceedings Part A: Forests for People* discussed community forestry themes. For instance, a keynote speech by political economist, Liz Alden Wily, focussed on African developments and made important points on international advances:

In more than 100 states, ordinary citizens are being acknowledged and encouraged as forest conservators... The trend is uneven. Intensions are mixed... Doubt, contestation, backtracking and backlash are common...

Liz went on to analyse the range of relations altered by community forestry: from local politics to civilian/state relations and concepts of rights. She concluded: "community forestry is proving a potent route to the empowerment of ordinary rural people". As an example, by 2002 around 5000 African communities from 22 African states were involved in formal community forestry projects. Liz drew distinctions between "benefit sharing" by local community-government collaborations and the trend towards devolving power from governments to local communities, "power sharing". Yet laws, policies

and institutions still limit over half of these African communities; they aren't owner-managers with autonomous rights.

The *Final Statement* from the XII World Forestry Congress made on 28th September 2003 in Quebec City expressed satisfaction with the increase:

in a variety of activities at a local level... involving communities in ownership, decision-making and management, increasing the scope for enhancing their livelihoods.

However dissatisfaction was registered too, with the deterioration of forest cover that impacts on local communities and Indigenous peoples.

Among the ideals singled out for future development were action on intergovernmental deliberations and governance that:

... is participatory, transparent and accountable; management and decision-making are decentralized, people are empowered, and partnerships flourish.

Further to this point the Congress noted the importance of acknowledging the "capital of culture, knowledge and good practice of indigenous peoples and local communities".

The Congress recommended several strategies and actions for international implementation, including the development of "effective governance arrangements for ensuring meaningful participation and equitable sharing of benefits, and for facilitating a diversity of models conferring tenure and access to resources reflecting local content". Similarly the Congress urged collaborative partnerships to include local communities and develop education in interdisciplinary ways.

## IUFRO World Conference 2005

The 22nd World Conference of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) will be held in Brisbane from 8th-13th August 2005 (see [www.iufro2005.com](http://www.iufro2005.com) for more info).

IUFRO is an international scientific body established in 1892. One of its eight Divisions, the Social, Economic, Information and Policy Sciences Division, has a Forest History Unit, co-ordinated by Dr Elisabeth Johann from the University of Agricultural Sciences in Vienna, Austria. (Dr Johann is a member of the AFHS and attended the AFHS Conference held in Hobart in February 2002.)

As part of IUFRO 2005, there will be a joint meeting of the IUFRO Forest History Unit and the AFHS. The aim of the meeting is to add to the diversity of sessions available to people attending the IUFRO conference and is expected to attract about 40-50 delegates with particular interests in the topic, in addition to AFHS members who may not be attending the main IUFRO event. The meeting will be held at the Queensland Museum, although the date is still being determined.



## Symposium Report (John Dargavel)

### *Where have all the archives gone? A symposium on the fate of business archives in the 21st century*

The Noel Butlin Archives Centre in the Australian National University celebrated the 50th anniversary of its collection with a symposium held at ANU on 24th October. The substantial problems of budgets, resources, space, access and use were discussed in a number of papers.

Speakers noted the importance of business in the social and economic history of Australia and the need to preserve records as part of our cultural history - business heritage - the current business climate is less conducive record preservation than it was in the past. Take-overs, foreign ownership, short-term executive contracts, emphasis on "the bottom line" and loss of connection with place were all mentioned as factors. However, several things were mentioned that might be of interest to forest historians.

First was the importance of seeking out and making better use of existing records. Ellen McCarthur provided an example of how many records of the retail trade she was able to find when she searched exhaustively through all the various repositories in Australia. Other sources that I had not thought about for forest history included court records and bank records of their customers.

The Noel Butlin Centre and the University of Melbourne Archives are the main repositories of business records, but they tend to concentrate on the larger firms - the "big end of town". However, State and local collections are more eclectic and may contain family or business papers of small concerns.

A surprising report was that, apart from genealogists, archives are not being used as much as they might. This was partly attributed to the time consuming nature of archival work and the pressures on academics to publish annually. More communication between historians and archivists emerged as an important matter to be encouraged.

## Film History Conference - Call for Papers

This isn't specifically related to Forest History, but the scope of the conference is broad, and the history of forest management as portrayed on the screen could be an interesting subject for a paper. From a late 1970s documentary on logging in Terania Creek in northern New South Wales to the television commercials run by the National Association of Forest Industries in the 1990s, there is certainly a bit of material out there. The details are:

### *12th Biennial Conference of the Film and History Association of Australia and New Zealand, 2nd-5th December 2004, Canberra*

Deadline for abstracts of 200 words (maximum) is 15th January 2004. Abstracts should be sent by e-mail to [marilyn.dooley@screensound.gov.au](mailto:marilyn.dooley@screensound.gov.au).

Enquiries: Marilyn Dooley, ScreenSound Australia, (02) 6161 2680 (tel), (02) 6248 2222 (fax) or by e-mail.

The conference will be hosted by ScreenSound Australia, the National Screen and Sound Archive, in association with the Australian National University, the University of Canberra, the Centre for Australian Cultural Studies and the History Teachers' Association.

## A Tree Puzzle Solved

In the May 2003 issue of the Newsletter, there was a short article, *A Tree Puzzle*, which discussed a reference to "Dragon-trees" contained in William Dampier's account of his travels in north-west Australia published at the end of the seventeenth century. The article asked "what was the dragon tree?".

Two AFHS members, Linden Gillbank and Brett Stubbs, have separately taken up the challenge and have provided the following responses.

### *Linden Gillbank*

A recent newsletter included an item headed *A tree puzzle*. It asked about the tree Dampier called the Dragon-tree. I've been reading Alex George's book on Dampier's collections, *William Dampier in New Holland Australia's first natural historian* (Blooming Books, 1999), and he suggests an answer to that question.

pp6-7 after quoting from Dampier's published account [as in the recent AFHS newsletter] "The bloodwoods are the trees that exude the red gum that reminded Dampier of dragon's blood - the gum released by the Dragon Tree, *Dracaena draco* (Linnaeus) Linnaeus, of the Madeira, Canary and Cape Verde Islands (Marrero et al., 1998). Several authors, e.g. Beaglehole (1962), have assumed that it was also the *Dracaena* that Dampier saw here, while others, e.g. L.R. Marchant (1988, p115), and N.G. Marchant (1988, p194), considered that it was a screw pine (*Pandanus*). *Dracaena* does not occur in Australia, and *Pandanus*, although it resembles *Dracaena* in habit and occurs at the (Dampier's) landing site, does not exude gum. The description of the leaves as dark-coloured and the bark as having knots or cracks fits bloodwoods rather than *Pandanus*."

p6 George mentions "the bloodwood *Eucalyptus dampieri*, appropriately so named by Denis Carr and Maisie Carr in 1987" in woodlands within a few kilometres of Dampier's landing site, where the *Cygnets* is thought to have been careened early in 1688.

pp146-47 in an appendix headed "Matters of fact and opinion" "L.R. Marchant and N.G. Marchant (1988, pp115, 194) considered Dampier's Dragon Tree of the 1688 visit to be a species of *Pandanus* since these "are the only trees of any significance in the area described by Dampier" and because the Dragon Tree (*Dracaena draco*) looks "remarkably like the Screw Pines" (*Pandanus*). Beken (1998) further confused the matter by stating that the Dragon Tree is "a tree which produces gum-tragacanth", the latter "a resin used in medicine as a drug medium". Tragacanth is a gum obtained from several species of the legume genus *Astragalus*, but these are small shrubby plants and could not be compared with apple-sized trees. The vegetation west of the beach at Karrakatta Bay where the *Cygnets* was careened is, in fact,

a savannah woodland of various trees including *Pandanus*, *Ficus*, *Pouteria*, *Acacia*, *Melaleuca* and *Eucalyptus*. A bloodwood eucalypt named *Eucalyptus dampieri* in 1987 after Dampier is common [in] the woodland. Towards Swan Point the trees become sparse and are mainly *Pandanus*. Dampier's description of the trees as "the bigness of our Apple-trees" with "Leaves of a dark-colour" and gum distilling "out of Knots or Cracks" in the bark fits bloodwoods, but not pandanus. Gum does not seep from the trunk of pandanus, nor does it have a rough, cracked bark, and the leaves are usually pale bluish or yellowish green. It is almost certain that Dampier was referring to the red gum, rather than to the growth form, when he described them as Dragon Trees. This interpretation was accepted by Hamilton and Bruce (1998). The illustration included by L.R. Marchant (1988, p115) with caption "The Dragon Tree seen in the Kimberley and recorded by Dampier who confused it with the *Pandanus Palm*" is of a dragon tree in the Cape Verde Islands, taken (as stated, op. cit. p. xv) from D. Defoe, *The Four Years Voyages of Captain George Roberts*, London, 1726.

Well there you are. I've included the appendix material to show what a minefield George has been through to make his diagnosis!!!!

#### **Dampier's dragon trees: a reply**

Brett J. Stubbs

The following is in response to the inquiry (Newsletter no. 35, May 2003) regarding the trees observed by William Dampier during his first visit to north-western Australia in *Cygnat* in 1688 and described by him as dragon trees. My initial approach to solving this puzzle was naively to consider what trees growing on the coast of north-western Australia are similar enough in appearance to the Canary Island dragon tree, *Dracaena draco*, to have been described as dragon trees by Dampier. A species of *Pandanus* would seem to be a likely candidate; in particular, *P. spiralis*. It grows to 10 metres, and resembles the dragon tree in general form; both trees have large, thick, pointed leaves crowded together at the ends of their branches.

*Pandanus*, however, does not exude the resin that "distils out of the knots or cracks" of Dampier's dragon trees and which especially attracted his attention. Nor does it have the "blackish rind" that Dampier described. Also, Dampier "saw no trees that bore fruit", and this, too, may exclude *P. spiralis* which bears large, conspicuous fruit. A different approach was obviously required!

It soon became evident that Dampier named his dragon tree not for its overall resemblance to *D. draco*, but for its reddish exudate, which resembled "dragon's blood", a well-known and useful plant product of the time. Dragon's blood (and its equivalents *sanguis draconis*, *resina draconis* and gum-dragon) referred to the red resins obtained from several different plants. A major source was the fruits of *Calamus draco*, a small palm indigenous to the East Indies. Another variety, Canary Island dragon's blood, was obtained from *D. draco*. Dragon's blood was used as an astringent in the treatment of

various medical disorders, but later became principally a colouring agent for use in the arts and in manufacturing.

In December 1642, nearly fifty years before Dampier's first visit to north-western Australia, one of Abel Tasman's officers (Visscher) had collected some of the resin that exuded from some enormous trees which he found growing on the Tasmanian coast. The resin, it was said, bore a resemblance to gum-lac, a useful resinous substance deposited on the branches of certain trees in the East Indies by a type of insect. The trees which Visscher saw may have been the Tasmanian blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), and his description was the first recorded of an Australian eucalypt, but the particular interest taken in the resin is more significant here.

In 1756, nearly seventy years after Dampier, de Brosse (*Histoire des Navigations aux Terres Australes*, quoted in Barton, 1889) briefly commented that "trees yielding a gum like dragon's blood" grew on the west coast of Australia, but he was merely repeating Dampier's observations. A much more substantial contribution to the story emerges from the visit of *Endeavour* in 1770.

James Cook recorded the discovery at Botany Bay in May 1770 of "2 sorts of Gum one sort of which is like Gum Dragon and is the same as I suppose Tasman took for gum lac". Joseph Banks made a similar entry in his journal: "The Soil wherever we saw it consisted of either swamps or light sandy soil on which grew very few species of trees, one which was large yielding a gum much like *sanguis draconis*".

Banks also remarked in early August 1770 about two plants which might be found useful by virtue of the abundant resin which they exuded. One was undoubtedly a grasstree, a species of *Xanthorrhoea*. The other was:

"a tree tolerably large with narrow leaves not unlike a willow which was very plentiful in every place into which we went; this yielded a blood red resin or rather gum-resin very nearly resembling *Sanguis draconis*, indeed as *Sanguis draconis* is the produce of several different plants this may perhaps be one of the sorts [my emphasis]. This I should suppose to be the gum mentioned by Dampier in his voyage round the world ... and by him compared with *sanguis draconis*, as possibly also that which Tasman saw upon Diemens Land, where he says he saw gum of the trees and gum Lac of the ground."

The tree which Banks described was probably *Eucalyptus crebra*, the narrow-leaved red ironbark, a medium-sized tree with hard, furrowed bark, densely impregnated with red-brown gum. This, together with Visscher's earlier report, suggests that Dampier's dragon tree was a species of *Eucalyptus*.

When Dampier returned to north-western Australia in *Roebuck* in 1699 he made a small collection of plant specimens, the first known of Australian species. This collection became part of the Sherardian Herbarium at Oxford and has been much described (Osborn and Gardner 1939, Osborn 1952, George 1971, Hamilton and Bruce 1998). Unfortunately, it contains no eucalypts, nor any clue to the identity of his dragon trees. Nevertheless, only a very small number of north-western species fit



Dampier's general description (blackish and somewhat rough bark, dark-coloured leaves, and the size of a large apple tree, i.e. around 10 metres tall). One in particular must be a strong candidate: the bloodwood, *E. polycarpa*, the gum of which was used medicinally by Aborigines (Lassack and McCarthy, 1997). Could this be Dampier's dragon tree?

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## Publications and Journals - Reviews by John Dargavel

### *Forest History Today*, Fall 2002

The Forest History Society's magazine never ceases to impress with the quality of its production and the excellence of the photographs it contains. And its annual report in this issue of \$US7 million in assets doubtless awe our Treasurer. There are two interesting articles on early American forestry schools. The Biltmore Forestry School that operated on a private forest estate in North Carolina is one of the world's most unusual, being run by a German forester Carl Schenck. This article describes how Schenck took his students on study tours to Europe and across the USA. They had a special train to cross the continent and whenever they wanted to visit the operations of a particular company, their carriage was uncoupled from a regular train and sidetracked to a logging railroad.

The other article describes the first African American forester, Ralph Brock, who trained in the Mont Alto State Forest Academy in Pennsylvania, 1903-1906. One of the photos shows the 18 students lined up for a formal photo. 16 of them are on horseback, but Brock and another student are standing. Perhaps students had to provide their own horses in those days?

### *Environmental History* 8(3), July 2003

The first paper prints Carolyn Merchant's presidential address to the American Society to Environmental History conference this year. Although presidential addresses are often platitudinous, her paper, "Shades of Darkness, Race and Environmental History", has considerable bite. Although drawn largely from America, her last paragraph gives us all something to think about:

The environmental justice movement includes justice for people of colour, justice for women and justice for nature. It reverses past environmental injustices disproportionately experienced by minorities. Environmental justice is the righting of the inequalities of the past through laws, regulations, compensation, and removal of the causes of eco-injustice. Ecojustice entails the redistribution of wealth through the redistribution of environmental goods and services. With hard work and awareness, the crisis of environmental injustice, noted by Wendell Berry [*The Hidden Wound*, Berkeley, Calif. 1989] and a host of other environmental historians, could result instead in justice restored.

The Biblioscope section has entries for all the papers in our *Australia's Ever-changing Forests V* volume. And of course they all now appear on the Forest History Society's massive bibliographic data base:

«<http://www.lib.duke.edu/forest/biblio.html>».

### *Environment and History* 9(3), August 2003

The four papers in this issue will appeal to many readers of this Newsletter. Two of them focus on water engineering, first in France and then in Queensland's Fitzroy River where vain attempts were made to convert it into a navigable waterway to Rockhampton. It throws a new light on the difficulties that must have been experienced by Rockhampton sawmills, like Hynes or Wilson Hart, that took logs from Fraser Island and shipped timber south. The other two papers draw on New Zealand cases to raise interesting questions. One deals with weeds and ranges widely over issues of their definition, history of science and their "contested place" in a settler society. The other takes the recent environmental planning perspective of "institutional trust" and uses it to examine the history of the virtual takeover of some Maori land for pine plantations.

### *British Columbia Forest History Newsletter* 71, September 2003

The two articles in this issue resonate with our history. The first concerns a fire lookout on Quest Mountain that dated from the 1920s but is no longer used for fire spotting. The BC Forest Service had planned to demolish it due to liability risks. However, local staff who were being retrenched when the District Office was closed have volunteered to save and rebuild it "as a legacy to their work in the region". Peter Holzworth has just embarked on a heritage study of fire towers in Queensland, so the article is very timely. The second article concerns the recollections of a forest ranger working in a very remote area from the 1930s. In these days of reliable radio and telephone communications, we are apt to forget how isolated forestry staff were.





**Light Railways No. 172, August 2003**

I hope that the first article in this issue "Tip up at Nannup" does not presage ill for our Western Australian conference! It has some pictures of poor loco No. 109 that fell off its rails in the 1930s. But it is now restored to its original magnificence and lives at the Timber Industry Museum at Manjimup - perhaps we will get to see it. Another article with a timber theme concerns "Some Manually Powered Tramways in Queensland". There is some interesting information about the Downs Timber Company at Dalby.

**Light Railways No. 173, October 2003**

The consistent high quality and regularity with which this magazine produced the Light Railways Research Society's members never ceases to amaze. This issue has a long article on "The Charters Towers Water Board Tramway". Although the focus is on the tramway built and operated by the Board from 1897 to 1941, and on the engines which used it, its purpose was to carry firewood for a pumping station on the Burdekin River. Like Bill Bunbury's *Timber for Gold* on the Kalgoorlie region, it reminds us of just how important wood was as fuel in Australia. What a great research topic for a forest historian!

**ACT Oral History Project, "Italian Internees at Blue Range Huts during World War II"**

With the outbreak of World War II, all un-naturalised Italians, regarded as "enemy aliens", and some British born subjects of Italian origin were placed in internment camps for the duration of the war. In the Canberra region, many local Italian men, including some from the Sydney area, were interned at in the Blue Range area of Uriarra during this period. Blue Range Hut is now a recreation area, but in 1942 it was surrounded by tents, home to 27 Italians who worked in the pine forest.

ACT Arts and Recreation Training was successful in gaining funding under the 2003-2004 ACT Heritage Grants Program for an oral history project, *Italian Internees at Blue Range Huts during World War II*. Project Officer Rose Costelloe is very interested in talking to surviving internees or anyone with information concerning the internment camp or former internees at the Blue Range Hut site in Uriarra Forest. Anyone with information is asked to contact Jan Wawrynczak, ACT Multicultural Arts Officer, on (02) 6230 5994.

**"Extinct" tree to be released for sale**

A tree, thought to be extinct until its re-discovery nine years ago, is expected to be released for commercial sale within 18 months. The Wollemi pine was found in September 1994 in the Wollemi National Park, north-west of Sydney. At the time of the discovery, scientists said the oldest Wollemi pine in the group of 40 was more than 400 years old and it, and all of those near it, were related to fossils around 200 million years old. Thousands of trees will start being released for sale in 2005. (Source: ABC News, September 2003).

**Newsletter Credits and Contributions**

The articles in this issue were submitted by Patricia Crawford, John Dargavel, Linden Gillbank, Sybil Jack, Anitra Nelson, Fintán Ó Laighin, Michael Roche, Paul Starr and Brett Stubbs. Thanks to Janie Binet, Kevin Frawley, Juliana Lazzari and Jenny Mills for their assistance.

The newsletter comes out about three times a year and is edited by AFHS Committee members on a rotating basis. Peter Davies will edit the next issue which I expect will be out in March or April (the current issue is a bit late - apologies for that). Contributions for the next issues should be sent to [«pwdavies@optusnet.com.au»](mailto:pwdavies@optusnet.com.au).

Both the December 2002 and May 2003 issues were numbered 34. This has been corrected for the current issue which is no. 36.



**Membership of the Australian Forest History Society (AFHS) Inc** is \$25 a year, or \$15 a year for students. For overseas addressees, it is \$30 (**in Australian currency please**). These prices do not include GST as the AFHS is not registered for paying or claiming GST. Membership expires on 30th June each year.

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